

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

AID-20 OMB-01 ACDA-19 EUR-25 IO-13 RSR-01 NIC-01 /163 W
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R 270916 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 977

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ET SO

SUBJ: SOMALI- ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS

1. DURING MY MEETING WITH SIAD, LATTER VOICED AMBIVALENT FEELINGS TOWARD ETHIOPIAN EMPEROR. AT ONE POINT HE SAID IT WAS LUDICROUS THAT HIM WAS CALLED " FATHER OF AFRICA" WHEN HE WAS " WORSE COLONIALIST THAN EVEN THE PORTUGUESE AND SOUTH AFRICANS." AT ANOTHER POINT SIAD CALLED HIM " GENTLE" AND OPINED THAT EMPEROR MUST BE LOSING HIS GRIP. THE LAST LETTER HE HAD RECEIVED FROM HIM JUST BEFORE OAU SUMMIT HAD BEEN ARROGANT AND ALMOST RUDE. " THIS WAS NOT HAILE SELASSIE."

2. SIAD EXPRESSED WONDER THAT US HAD BECOME DEEPLY INVOLVED WITH SUCH " FEUDAL, BACKWARD" REGIME AS ETHIOPIA. WHAT WAS EMPEROR'S MOXIE WITH AMERICANS?

3. I SAID AMERICAN PEOPLE HAD NEVER FORGOTTEN PICTURE OF LONELY LITTLE FIGURE AT GENEVA AT TIME OF ITALIAN INVASION. WE HAD A LOT OF SYMPATHY FOR THE UNDERDOG.

4. SIAD MULLED THIS ONE OVER FOR A WHILE. HE SOON RECOVERED, HOWEVER, AND SAID, " BUT THE ETHIOPIANS, WITH ALL THE SUPPORT

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YOU GIVE THEM, ARE NO LONGER THE UNDERDOGS. WE ARE. WHY
CAN' T THE US SEE THAT?"

5. I REPLIED THAT WITH ITS ARMY STRENGTH AND MUSCLE FLEXING, SOMALIA DID NOT EXACTLY LOOK LIKE AN " UNDERDOG." RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, THE ETHIOPIANS CONTINUED TO BE VERY MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT SOMALI INTENTIONS. US PRESENCE AT KAGNEW HAD BEEN REDUCED AND WOULD IN TIME BE PROBABLY REDUCED FURTHER. I PERSONALLY WONDERED WHETHER MILITARY INSTALLATIONS OF GREAT POWERS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD HAD HELPED THINGS OR WERE ESPECIALLY POPULAR WITH THE LOCAL PEOPLES. (COMMENT: SOVIET MILITARY ADVISER WAS REPORTEDLY KILLED A FEW DAYS AGO BY SOMALI OFFICER.) MOREOVER, WE INTENDED TO ACT WITH GREAT RESTRAINT IN THE CURRENT ARMS COMPETITION.

6. AS IN PAST, SIAD SCOFFED AT IDEA OF SOMALIA'S TRYING TO TAKE ON ETHIOPIA MILITARILY. HE AGAIN GAVE ME HIS WORD THAT SOMALIA WOULD NOT ATTACK. ALL HIS EFFORTS WERE DIRECTED TOWARDS TRYING TO BRING ABOUT HIS COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAM. HE NEEDED BOTH TIME AND PEACE.

7. I SAID I WAS CONVINCED ETHIOPIA SIMILARLY HAD NO INTENTION ATTACK SOMALIA. NEVERTHELESS, I DID THINK VERY DANGEROUS SITUATION WOULD BE CREATED IF GUERRILLAS -- SOMALI, ARAB OR OTHER -- WERE EVER TO TRY TO PENETRATE ETHIOPIA FROM SOMALIA AND STIR UP TROUBLE. THIS HAD BEEN TRIED BY THE ABDIRAZAK GOVERNMENT YEARS AGO AND RECRUDESCENCE OF SUCH TACTICS COULD WELL HAVE UNPREDICTABLE CONSEQUENCES. SIAD REJOINED THAT THIS HAD NEVER BEEN DONE BY HIS GOVERNMENT. IN FACT, HE HAD PUT IN PRISON " WITH HEAVY HEART" A NUMBER OF WOULD- BE GUERRILLAS.

8. SIAD SAID TENSIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES STILL BAD AND HE REMAINED UNEASY. ETHIOPIANS HAD NOT WITHDRAWN ANY TROOPS FROM BORDER SINCE OAU SUMMIT. ON CONTRARY, SOME HAD EVEN MOVED IN CLOSER. HE WAS STILL PUZZLED AND WORRIED BY WHY HIS DIALOGUE WITH EMPEROR HAD BEEN BROKEN OFF AND INSTEAD TROOPS SENT INTO OGADEN. " THIS COSTS A LOT OF MONEY AND THEY DON' T HAVE THAT MUCH."

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